



THE GRIGNON GAZETTE

September 2016

UPCOMING EVENTS

Welcome!

Welcome to the first edition of the Grignon Gazette! This monthly newsletter is yet another way to stay connected with the happenings at the Grignon Mansion. We will feature historical articles, schedule of events and news of activities. We will be sharing tidbits of Grignon history that is not widely known, some extending far back into the 18th century.

So far, 2016 has been a very fun and exciting. The season began with over 100 Boy Scouts camping on the Mansion grounds in May. At the end of the month, the Mansion was the site for a wedding ceremony.

In June, we had the pleasure of hosting the Kimberly Community Band and the Little Chute Community Band. We also shared Grignon history with visitors at Hydro Park during the Electric City Experience.

In July, we hosted a Civil War Living History demonstration. Guests were able to step back in time and learn about life as a soldier in the Union Army. The members from Company E of the Second Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry out of Green Bay demonstrated black powder firing, military drills, and Civil War medicine.

August was another busy month at the Mansion. We were a rest stop on the Bike to

the Beat, which was a bike ride associated with the Mile of Music. Eric W. Krueger and Marty Paschke provided music to greet the more than 650 bikers that came through. We had a great time visiting with and cheering on the athletes on the ride. We also hosted a Vintage Car Show in August.

Guests viewed Model A, Model T, and other pre-1940 vehicles. Lamers showcased their trolley car, carriage rides were available from Cavanaugh Carriages, the new Kaukauna Fire Department fire truck and ambulance were on display, and lunch was available at our brat fry.

We still have some exciting events coming up this year. In September, we will be having a Fur Trader's Encampment and Fall Festival. Re-enactors will give you a view of what life was like in Colonial America. Children's games, crafts, trolley rides, and a brat fry will all be part of the festivities.

In addition, we are planning on opening up for Christmas tours this December. Watch our website, Facebook and the Grignon Gazette for more information!

We hope to see you soon!



Fur Trader's Encampment and Fall Festival

Saturday, September 17, 2016 10 am – 4 pm

Sunday, September 18, 2016 10 am – 3 pm

Come enjoy the festivities as re-enactors provide an authentic living history of what life was like in Colonial America. Historic children's games, crafts, trolley rides and a brat fry will also be available.



Christmas Tours

Dates and details to come!

The Very Beginnings

by Dick Boyd Ph.D.

Today the Grignon Mansion in Kaukauna is a well-known historical museum. Charles A. Grignon built it in 1837 as a magnificent wedding gift for his bride, Mary Elizabeth Meade. However, the history of the Grignon Family goes back centuries prior to that noteworthy event. Their history is chock-full of interesting and exciting events that are not common knowledge, but were important in the development of our State and Country. It is believed that the Grignons were royalty in France (with estate & castle), probably in the 1600s, when some members of the clan came to New France (Canada). It was common practice in those times that male members of royal families who were not in direct line to inherit the family wealth would come to the New World to make their own "fame & fortune." Of course, the "big money business" of that era was the Fur Trade.

There are currently over 60,000 documents on Grignon ancestry available on-line, including over 800 military records. Suffice it to say that the Grignons appeared in Canada by the late 17th century, probably as merchants or soldiers. By the early 1700s, they were thoroughly invested in the fur trade in both Canada and the vast Northwest Territory, of which Wisconsin was then a part. The pertinent history of our "Wisconsin Grignons" actually begins with the De



Langlade family. Sieur Augustin De Langlade was a native Frenchman, born there in 1695 into a noble family, but who emigrated to Canada at a young age where he ventured into the fur trade early in the 18th century.

As did many French traders, Augustin De Langlade took a Native American wife, who was the sister of an important Ottawa chief known to the French as *The Fork*. She gave birth to several offspring, including a son, Charles De Langlade in 1724, who would become extremely famous. By 1720, Augustin De Langlade had settled at Mackinac Island, then the center of fur trade on the Western Lakes. As an officially licensed government trader, he probably controlled much of the trade action flowing through Mackinac at this time. Young Charles was educated by the Jesuit Missionaries based on the island, while also retaining strong ties to his mother and the

Ottawa culture. By the time he was a teenager, young De Langlade was considered a fierce warrior who would become renowned and influential throughout New France.

In 1759 at Mackinac, Charles De Langlade married a prominent French woman, Charlotte Bourassa. He promptly took her to Green Bay, where father and son had established a trading post in about 1744. Charles and Charlotte had two daughters. One girl, Domitelle at age 13, met and married an ambitious young fur trader named Pierre Grignon. At this point, the stage was set for future events that would underpin the beginning and evolution of the Grignon Fur Trade Dynasty, as well as that of the city of Green Bay itself. We'll expand this story in our next *Gazette*.

Quilt Raffle

Raffle tickets for this beautiful Queen sized quilt are available at the Mansion. Tickets are \$1 each or 6 for \$5.

Winner will be drawn on September 18, 2016



Looking to Volunteer?

We are always looking for new volunteers at the Mansion. Opportunities include tour guides, gift shop, blacksmith, grounds keeping, and more.

Contact us by email at info@grignonmansion.org for more information!

